



**IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

**September 28, 2006**

**For immediate release**

- 1. Vilsack recognizes Earth Science Week in Iowa; Open house planned at quarry**
- 2. Watershed Quality Planning Task Force to hold second meeting; open to public**
- 3. Track LiDAR mapping progress on DNR Web site**
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## **VILSACK RECOGNIZES EARTH SCIENCE WEEK IN IOWA; OPEN HOUSE PLANNED AT QUARRY**

DES MOINES — Governor Tom Vilsack has signed a proclamation declaring the second week of October as Earth Science Week in Iowa, joining nations around the world in the celebration.

The theme for this year's Earth Science Week is "Be a Citizen Scientist," encouraging people to become aware of and involved in their natural surroundings. To mark Earth Science Week, the Black Hawk County Conservation Board and Basic Materials Corporation will hold a public "open house" at Yokum Quarry in Black Hawk County.

"This is a great educational event for children and people of all ages," said Bob Libra, DNR State Geologist. "Quarries offer an excellent view of our rocks, fossils, and glacial deposits, provide an understanding of our groundwater sources, and show the value of our mineral resources."

The Yokum Quarry will be open Sunday, Oct. 1 from 10 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. The quarry is located at the intersection of Winslow and Union Roads in northwest Black Hawk County. A variety of functions and activities are planned, and the public is encouraged to come and step into the earth. Staff from the DNR's Geological Survey, IOWATER volunteer water monitoring program and Project AWARE will be among the exhibitors at the open house.

The Earth Sciences encompass our understanding of the planet, and its rocks, soils, water, and atmosphere -- our natural resource base. A healthy and sustainable natural resource base is essential to both the states economy and to Iowans quality of life.

**For information on the Yokum Quarry event, contact Sherman Lundy, Basic Materials Corporation, at (319) 235-6583. For information on Earth Science Week or Iowa's geological resources, contact Bob Libra, State Geologist, Iowa DNR-Geological Survey, at (319) 335-1585.**

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## **WATERSHED QUALITY PLANNING TASK FORCE TO HOLD SECOND MEETING; OPEN TO PUBLIC**

DES MOINES — A committee appointed by the Iowa Legislature to discuss a voluntary statewide water quality program has set its second meeting for Wednesday, Oct. 4, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The Watershed Quality Planning Task Force will meet at the Metro Waste Authority, 300 E. Locust St., #100, in Des Moines.

The meeting agenda includes an overview of existing water quality programs and funding sources in Iowa, as well as previous watershed research. The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, the DNR, the Legislative Services Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service will all give presentations. The task force will also review its legislative charges and will establish the committee's next steps.

The Iowa Legislature called for creation of the committee during the last session. Specifically, the legislature is asking the committee to develop a report containing recommendations on the following issues:

- Improving water quality
- Creating economic incentives for environmental compliance
- Facilitating implementation efforts
- Developing quantifiable protocols and procedures
- Providing greater flexibility through community-based, non-regulatory, performance-driven watershed management planning.

The committee is comprised of representatives from both houses and both parties of the Legislature, Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities, Iowa League of Cities, Iowa Association of Business and Industry, Iowa Water Pollution Control Association, Iowa Rural Water Association, Growing Green Communities, Iowa Environmental Council, Iowa Farm Bureau, Iowa Corn Growers Association, Iowa Soybean Association, Iowa Pork Producers Association, Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Iowa, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the Iowa Conservation Alliance.

The committee meeting is open to the public.

**MEDIA CONTACT: Jessie Brown at (515) 281-5131 or Sharon Tahtinen at (515) 281-7066.**

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## **TRACK LIDAR MAPPING PROGRESS ON DNR WEB SITE**

DES MOINES — A new addition to the DNR's Web site will allow Iowans to view the progress of the statewide LiDAR mapping project.

LiDAR, which stands for Light Detection and Ranging, is a new technology that creates an interactive topographic map with elevation data accurate within eight inches. As a supplement to field surveys, LiDAR can be used to plan for road construction, other construction sites and conservation farming practices. It can also be used to evaluate alternative infrastructure options, for education and research purposes, and in engineering.

More information about LiDAR, as well as updates on progress of the statewide mapping project, is available at [www.iowadnr.gov/mapping/lidar/](http://www.iowadnr.gov/mapping/lidar/).

Depending on weather, the DNR plans to collect the statewide data in three seasons: fall 2006, and spring and fall 2007. Initial data would be available for viewing from the DNR Web site approximately two to three months after collection.

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## **PUBLIC ASKED TO ATTEND MEETING ON IMPROVING MCLOUD RUN, IOWA'S ONLY URBAN TROUT STREAM**

CEDAR RAPIDS – The DNR will hold a public meeting to gather Iowans' input prior to drafting an improvement plan for Iowa's only urban trout stream, McCloud Run.

The DNR will hold the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Oct. 2. at the Cedar Rapids Department of Water, 1111 Shaver Road NE. All interested residents and parties may attend.

McCloud Run is a spring-fed stream located in the heart of Cedar Rapids, with water conditions cold enough to support a trout population year-round. However, McCloud Run was placed on the state's impaired waters list after a fish kill in August 2001. Heat shock caused the fish kill when a rapid rise in water temperature stressed the trout. The rise in temperature came from rain water that fell on hot roofs, parking lots and paved areas, and then ran into the stream.

“McLoud Run is a unique resource for the people of Cedar Rapids, and we need their help to make it a healthier stream,” said Joe Herring, with the DNR’s Watershed Improvement section. “As we develop a water quality plan for McLoud Run, it’s very important that we have the help of Cedar Rapids residents, who know and use the stream.”

The DNR is seeking public input to provide opinions, comments and assistance in determining the causes of and solutions to the problem. These comments will be used to develop a water quality plan, also known as a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), for heat pollution in McLoud Run. Citizen involvement is critical to achieving water quality goals at McLoud Run and across the state.

**MEDIA CONTACT: Joe Herring, DNR, at (515) 281-8143.**